

This latest feat of the human spirit harkens to the accomplishments of the very earliest heroes of flight. Charles Lindberg crossing the Atlantic. Amelia Earhart crossing the Atlantic, the Pacific, and attempting to circumnavigate the globe at the equator. Richard Byrd and Floyd Bennett making the first flight over the North Pole. And Gus McLeod repeating their journey in an open-cockpit bi-plane.

LUBBOCK AVALANCHE JOURNAL
CELEBRATES 100 YEARS IN PRINT

HON. LARRY COMBEST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 2000

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize the Lubbock Avalanche-Journal newspaper in Lubbock, Texas in celebration of their 100 year anniversary of publication on the South Plains. The A-J has served the people of the South Plains for an entire century, longer even than the official town of Lubbock itself, which was incorporated in 1909.

Over the years, like its home, the paper has grown tremendously. The A-J now boasts an impressive number of over 64,000 subscriptions in Lubbock and the surrounding area. Without fail, the A-J has printed the latest news every day and has been instrumental in helping our town grow from a rural, rustic town into the thriving city it is today. The A-J has also helped shape the history on the South Plains by providing essential information to our community.

With the advent of the Internet and the World Wide Web, the A-J online is now able to connect people from all over the world. Current, former and future Lubbockites are just a mouse-click away from getting the latest information on what's happening on the South Plains.

The A-J has helped build a bridge of communication on the South Plains and has made a century's worth of friendships. I extend my gratitude to all involved in its successful production—from the publisher and editors to the printing press operators and paper couriers. Your hard work and dedication has made a significant contribution to our community. Best wishes for at least another century of continued and devoted services.

HONORING RICHARD A. WATSON,
FROM THE 20TH DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 2000

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, as a former high school teacher, today I commend a retiring teacher from the 20th District of Illinois, Mr. Richard A. Watson. For 31 years, Mr. Watson taught agricultural education and served as the FFA advisor at Lincolnwood High School in Raymond, IL.

Some teachers think that education is a 9 to 5 job, but not Mr. Watson. Besides teaching in the classroom, he spent countless hours coaching judging teams, public speakers, and parliamentary procedure teams. Mr. Watson

spent time after school assisting students with their Supervised Agricultural Experiences and other various community activities that the FFA Chapter set out to do.

Because of Mr. Watson's hard work, he was able to watch his students achieve their goals. Whether it was a State FFA Degree, Foundation Award or State FFA Office, he was an advocate and a motivator. More importantly, Mr. Watson was known for his famous phrase, "Keep your chin up," when things didn't go so well.

Mr. Watson has contributed to the betterment of the 20th District because he taught high school agricultural education to the person who advises me today on agricultural issues, Amy Matthews. I thank him for his 31 years of service and congratulate him for his outstanding teaching career.

But I also want to remind him, that our area won't let him slip away. Good teachers, good people are always needed and always welcome in our communities. While his official service may be ending, I know we can count on him to continue to make a difference in the lives of our children and therefore our collective futures.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FURNITURE FIRE SAFETY ACT OF 2000

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 2000

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, today I join with my colleagues, Representative ROB ANDREWS and Representative CURT WELDON, to introduce legislation that is long overdue. The United States has one of the highest fire death rates in the industrialized world. In the vast majority of home fire deaths, the killer is upholstered furniture, which is one of the most flammable items in the American home. Because of the seriousness of this problem, and the devastation it has caused countless American families (including those of Fire Fighters killed in the line of duty fighting home fires), we have introduced the Furniture Fire Safety Act of 2000.

This legislation would amend the Consumer Product Safety Act to require the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to immediately establish a performance standard that is equal to the successful California state standard—the only one of its kind in the nation. California Technical Bulletin 117 (TB 117) is a mandatory standard for all residential upholstered furniture for sale in California that has been in effect since 1975. It is both an open flame test and a smoldering cigarette test for the component materials that make up the upholstered furniture. While the fire death rates for furniture fires have dropped for both California and the entire nation, death rates in California have dropped by a larger percentage than the nation as a whole. In 1994, for example, the theoretical number of California fire deaths due to upholstered furniture based on actual national figures, would be 65.2. However, the actual number of furniture fire deaths in California in that year was 10.

Mr. Speaker, two people die each day as a result of residential furniture fires. CPSC data report that, on average, 55 people die per

month in fires where upholstered furniture is the first item ignited. Most of these fires are caused by cigarette ignitions, while a significant portion is caused by open-flames such as matches, lighters, and candles.

Upholstered furniture is one of the most flammable items in the American home. In just four short minutes, a sofa fire can engulf an entire living room in flames, filling the entire home with thick, dark smoke and toxic gases. Temperatures can exceed 1,400 degrees Fahrenheit in this short period of time, according to the National Fire Protection Association.

Since 1994, the National Association of State Fire Marshals, the International Association of Fire Fighters, and many other fire safety and consumer groups have urged the CPSC to develop national standards to deter residential furniture fires. To date, there has been no significant progress on the part of CPSC. In lieu of national standards, the upholstered furniture industry is being asked to adhere on a voluntary basis to lax safety standards for home furniture sold in all states except California. The result has been that approximately 4,500 Americans have lost their lives in residential furniture fires since 1994.

What is even more disturbing is the simple fact that for a small 3–5% add-on cost to the manufacturers for flame-retardant measures (on average, the cost of three pizzas, \$20–\$30) a sofa can be made safe and potentially save lives. Even more telling is the fact that price studies have revealed that flame-resistant sofas purchased at retail outlets in California were priced equal to, or in some cases less, than identical, non-flame-resistant products purchased from that same furniture retailer at a location outside of California.

This legislation would save lives. The time has come to take action. We can not allow one more person to die unnecessarily from an upholstered furniture fire. I urge my colleagues to support this effort.

RETIREMENT OF McEACHERN
HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL RALPH
WILLIAMS

HON. BOB BARR

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 2000

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is with great admiration—and some sadness—that I honor Principal Ralph Williams, as he plans for his announced retirement from the Cobb County School system and McEachern High School. Principal Ralph Williams came to Cobb County from Tennessee in 1972, to serve as administrative assistant for Pebblebrook High School. He later served as an administrator for Pebblebrook, Wheeler and North Cobb, before accepting his current position as principal of McEachern High School in 1982. For the past 18 years he has served the students of McEachern with honor and integrity; tirelessly devoting himself to the west Cobb community and this outstanding school.

McEachern High School has an extensive history in the community. It was founded in 1908 as an Agricultural and Mechanical School, with financial support and donated land from John Newton McEachern, co-founder of the Life of Georgia Insurance Company. In 1933, when A & M schools were abandoned, the community opened the Macland